



**American Lung Association
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March 15, 2013

Public Health Committee
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

**Testimony of the American Lung Association in Connecticut in
Support of Raised Senate Bill 991 An Act Concerning an Advisory
Council on Palliative Care**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and Members of the Public
Health Committee:

The American Lung Association in Connecticut writes in support of Senate
Bill 991, which would establish the Connecticut Palliative Care Advisory
Council within the Department of Public Health.

Palliative care focuses on relieving those with a serious illness from
symptoms, pain, and stress, with the goal of improved quality of life for
both the patient and their family. Palliative care gives patients control
and choice over their own care. The strong partnership between patients,
families, and the palliative care team assures that treatment goals are
established and coordinated throughout the course of a serious illness.

This legislation will focus on improving the quality and delivery of patient-
centered and family-focused care to Connecticut residents facing a
serious illness by establishing a State Advisory Council on Palliative Care.
The Advisory Council will analyze the current state of palliative care in
Connecticut and advise the department on matters relating to the
improvement of palliative care and the quality of life for persons with
terminal illnesses.

Lung cancer is the leading cancer killer in both men and women in the
United States. Approximately 375,000 Americans are living with lung
cancer today and an estimated 160,000 will die from the disease this
year. According to the National Cancer Institute, in 2009 there were
approximately 2,600 individuals in Connecticut with lung cancer. A 2010
clinical study of 151 lung cancer patients showed that early palliative care
provided alongside cancer treatment delivered better patient quality of
life and longer patient survival time¹.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) refers to both chronic
bronchitis and emphysema; both are characterized by obstruction of
airflow that interferes with normal breathing. COPD is the third leading
cause of death in the United States. In 2011, there were 166,000 adults
in Connecticut with COPD according to the Behavioral Risk Factor
Surveillance System (BRFSS). Many individuals with COPD benefit from

palliative care due to the severity of the illness. Palliative care is used to manage the symptoms of COPD and the stress and anxiety caused by having the disease.

Being aware of and having access to palliative care is vital to improving the quality of life for people in Rhode Island diagnosed with lung cancer. Thank you for your consideration of SB991. We urge your favorable vote on this bill.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Marichal". The signature is written in dark ink on a light pink rectangular background.

Michelle Marichal
CT Acting Director, Health Education and Public Policy
American Lung Association in Connecticut